

From: Lance Smith <[REDACTED]>

Date: Wednesday, December 29, 2021 at 7:31 PM

To: IMAS Assembly Members <IMASAssemblyMembers@anchorageak.gov>, World Wide Web Municipal Clerk <WWMASMC@anchorageak.gov>

Subject: I am writing this letter to suggest a change concerning the information provided to the public via the municipality COVID MAB site needed detail . please consider change

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Dear Anchorage Assembly,

Thank you for providing a resource as valuable as the Municipal of Anchorage Hub, especially as it relates to COVID-19 Antibody Treatment Centers available in Anchorage. The hub communicates and provides the community information and guidance efficiently and accurately. I am writing this letter to suggest a change concerning the information provided to the public via the municipality COVID MAB site found at the following link: <https://covid-response-moa-muniorg.hub.arcgis.com/pages/antibodies>

Even though the information is shared by the Municipality of Anchorage I am sure that you meant no harm and weren't aware the community is missing a key detail when the Municipality of Anchorage Coronavirus Response Hub shares information as it relates to COVID-19 Monoclonal Antibody Treatment.

The municipal hub shares two treatment center sites that are available to the Anchorage municipality and shares contact information of available treatment sites. One site offers a phone number and location, while the other offers a website and location.

Neither site shares the cost of the service. This missing detail is significant especially since one site is free and only requires minimal information, and the other has an undetermined cost, requires billable insurance and/or a billable credit card, and an agreement to pay that extends until the credit card expires.

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Fairweather Infusion Center is a company that is free to the patient. WEKA Covid Treatment Center is the company that requires billable insurance, a credit card, and a payment agreement.

Upon first contact, Fairweather requires patients to leave a message at a voicemail, and they will call you back as soon as possible to make an appointment. WEKA has a person available who mans the phone and will send you an agreement and will schedule you immediately and send you forms to complete online, or you can schedule yourself at the WEKA website. Of the two, unfortunately only WEKA is unable to indicate the cost of the service. Also, WEKA provides no cost of service upon arrival at the treatment center, no bill or receipt at the location after the service, or bill by email.

When asked, the WEKA operator did not know the cost for the service but later estimated the antibody treatment to equal about \$550. WEKA recommended patients work with their insurance agent regarding coverage but all unpaid balances would be paid by the patient. Also, it is worth noting that the WEKA website also shares no prices for the treatment to the patient.

At a time in this pandemic, when emergency medical care is at the forefront for people who have COVID-19, providing our community with a new data point: the prices that medical centers will charge for their services allows our community a chance to determine their best treatment center.

I recognize the cost may be difficult to indicate on our Anchorage Municipal Hub, however, simple, understandable language, such as 'No Charge to Anchorage Resident' or "Requires Insurance and Credit Card" would help discern the difference when choosing for themselves or a loved one.

Even with the costs of the services shared in plain language, it will still be tough for cost-conscious patients to decide which treatments they'll need. But during this crisis knowing the prices may be useful for people who are uninsured and or who are considered "out of network" and don't wish to face a big bill they can't afford if their insurance decides not to pay.

I thank the Anchorage Assembly for taking the time to read my letter and hope you will thoughtfully consider my request to make changes to the Municipality of Anchorage Coronavirus Response Hub so that it shares one lacking detail, the financial requirements and price associated with COVID-19 Monoclonal Antibody Treatment, provided by each of the locations our community can utilize to receive this life-saving treatment.

Thank you
C. Lance Smith